

CAMPYLOBACTER INFECTION

(Campylobacteriosis)
FACT SHEET

What is *Campylobacter*?

Campylobacter is a bacterium that infects the intestines. It is the most common bacterial cause of diarrheal illness in the United States.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms are usually diarrhea (sometimes bloody), stomachache, fever, nausea and vomiting. The illness usually ends by itself within one week, but some people may require treatment with antibiotics.

How is *Campylobacter* spread?

The bacteria are found in human and animal feces. It is very common in cattle and chickens. People can get it by eating or drinking raw or contaminated water, milk, poultry, meat, or from infected pets and other animals. It is very rare to get *Campylobacter* from another person who has it.

How long from when a person is infected until they get ill?

Usually people get sick within two to five days of infection with these bacteria, but it can be as short as one day to as long as ten days before illness occurs.

How can *Campylobacter* infection be prevented?

It can be prevented by properly cooking poultry and meats to at least 165° F; by thorough hand-washing with soap after using the toilet; before handling any food and after handling raw foods; only drinking pasteurized milk; and never drinking water from creeks, lakes, or springs.

Where can I get more information about campylobacteriosis?

To find out more, call your doctor or local public health agency. Only a special laboratory test can tell if someone is infected.

**Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Section for Communicable Disease Prevention
Phone: (866) 628-9891 or (573) 751-6113**